

**Claims:**

1. A method of tracking time spent at a location by a person, the method comprising:
  - (a) providing at least one machine-readable location identification code at the location to provide location information for the location;
  - (b) providing the person with a reader for reading the at least one machine-readable location identification code at the location;
  - (c) on arrival of the person at the location, reading a first-read machine-readable location identification code in the at least one machine-readable location identification code using the reader and determining departure time based on when the first-read machine-readable location identification code is read;
  - (d) on departure of the person from the location, reading a last-read machine-readable location identification code in the at last one machine-readable location identification code using the reader and determining an arrival time based on when the last-read machine-readable location identification code is read; and,
  - (e) recording service information data comprising the arrival time and the departure time.
2. The method as defined in claim 1 wherein
  - step (a) comprises providing a plurality of machine-readable location identification codes distributed throughout a plurality of locations wherein for each location in the plurality of locations, the plurality of machine-readable location identification codes includes at least one associated machine-readable location identification code provided at the location for providing location information for the location; and,

step (d) further comprises recording the location information such that service information data further comprises the location information.

3. The method as defined in claim 2 further comprising identifying the person, wherein step (e) further comprises storing identification information for the person such that the service information data further comprises the identification information for the person.

4. The method as defined in claim 3 wherein the service information data is searchable by search parameters comprising at least one of the identification information for the person, the location information and a selected time interval including at least one of the arrival time and the departure time.

5. The method as defined in claim 4 further comprising selectively providing at least one of

a shift report for the person over a selected time interval, wherein the shift report comprises each location in the plurality of locations the person has visited during the selected time interval and, for each location, an associated time period spent at the location; and,

a location report for the location over a selected time interval, wherein the location report comprises each person that has visited the location during the selected time interval and a time spent by that person at the location.

6. The method as defined in claim 1 wherein

step (a) comprises providing at least one machine-readable task identifier at the location, wherein an associated machine-readable location identification code and associated task identification information are determinable from the at least one machine-readable task identifier, the associated machine-readable location identification code being included in the at least one machine-readable location identification code;

step (c) comprises reading the first-read machine-readable location identification code from a first-read machine-readable task identifier in the at least one machine-readable task identifier on arrival of the person at the location;

5 step (d) comprises reading the last-read machine-readable location identification code from a last-read machine-readable task identifier in the at least one machine-readable task identifier on departure of the person from the location; and,

10 the service information data comprises the associated task identification information for each machine-readable task identifier in the at least one machine-readable task identifier at the location.

7. The method as defined in claim 6 wherein

the at least one machine-readable task identifier at the location comprises a plurality of machine-readable task identifiers at the location;

15 step (c) comprises

(i) reading the first-read machine-readable location identification code from a first machine-readable task identifier in the plurality of machine-readable task identifiers on arrival of the person at the location, and,

20 (ii) reading a subsequent machine-readable task identifier in the plurality of machine-readable task identifiers on commencing an associated task identified by the associated task information readable from the subsequent machine-readable task identifier;

25 the service information comprises, for each machine-readable task identifier in the plurality of machine-readable task identifiers, the associated task information, an associated task start time and an associated task completion time.

8. The method as defined in claim 1 wherein the reader comprises a wireless transmitter, and step (d) comprises transmitting the arrival time and the departure time from the reader to a storage device.
9. The method as defined in claim 1 wherein the reader comprises a time-keeper for determining the arrival time and the departure time; and
  - a memory for storing the arrival time and the departure time, such that step (d) comprises storing the service information data in the memory.
10. 10. The method as defined in claim 9 further comprising uploading the service information data from the reader to a storage device.
11. The method as defined in claim 6 wherein the at least one machine-readable task identifier comprises at least one barcode.
12. The method as defined in claim 1 wherein the at least one machine-readable location identification code comprises a single code only such that the first-read machine-readable location identification code and the last-read machine-readable location identification code are identical.
13. A system for tracking time spent at a location by a person, the system comprising:
  - 20 at least one machine-readable location identification code provided at the location to provide location information for the location;
  - a mobile reader for reading the at least one machine-readable location identification code at the location;
  - 25 a time keeper for determining an arrival time when a first-read machine-readable location identification code in the at least one machine-readable location identification code is read and a departure time when a last-

read machine-readable location identification code in the at least one machine-readable location identification code is read; and

    a storage medium for recording service information data comprising the arrival time and the departure time.

- 5   14.       The system as defined in claim 13 further comprising a plurality of machine-readable location identification codes distributed throughout a plurality of locations wherein for each location in the plurality of locations, the plurality of machine-readable location identification codes includes an associated at least one machine-readable location identification code
- 10   provided at the location for providing location information for the location, wherein the service information data further comprises the location information, and the storage medium is operable to store the location information.
- 15   15.       The system as defined in claim 14 further comprising personal identification means for providing identification information for the person, wherein the service information data further comprises the identification information, and the storage medium is operable to store identification information.
- 20   16.       The system as defined in claim 15 further comprising a searching module for searching the service information data using search parameters including at least one of the identification information for the person, the location information and a selected time interval including at least one of the arrival time and the departure time.
- 25   17.       The system as defined in claim 16 further comprising a report generation means for generating at least one of  
                  a shift report for the person over a selected time interval, wherein the shift report comprises each location in the plurality of locations

the person has visited during the selected time interval and, for each location, an associated time period spent at the location; and,

5 a location report for the location over a selected time interval, wherein the location report comprises each person that has visited the location during the selected time interval and a time spent by that person at the location.

18. The system as defined in claim 13 wherein

the at least one machine-readable location identification code is provided by at least one machine-readable task identifier at the location;

10 the mobile reader is operable to read the at least one machine-readable location identification code and associated task identification information from the at least one machine-readable task identifier; and

15 the service information data comprises the associated task identification information for each machine-readable task identifier in the at least one machine-readable task identifier at the location.

19. The system as defined in claim 18 wherein

the at least one machine-readable task identifier at the location comprises a plurality of machine-readable task identifiers at the location;

the time-keeper is operable to determine

20 (i) the arrival time to be when the first-read machine-readable location identification code is first read from a first machine-readable task identifier in the plurality of machine-readable task identifiers,

25 (ii) an associated task start time for each machine-readable task identifier to be when the machine-readable task identifier is first read, and

(iii) an associated task completion time for each machine-readable task identifier to be at least one of when, after the machine-readable task identifier is first read, the machine-readable task identifier is next read and another machine-readable task identifier is read; and,

the service information comprises, for each machine-readable task identifier in the plurality of machine-readable task identifiers, the associated task information, an associated task start time and an associated task completion time.

10 20. The system as defined in claim 13 wherein the reader comprises a wireless transmitter for transmitting the arrival time and the departure time from the reader to a storage device.

15 21. The system as defined in claim 13 wherein the reader comprises a time-keeper for determining the arrival time and the departure time; and, a memory for storing the arrival time and the departure time.

22. The system as defined in claim 21 further comprising connection means for uploading the service information data from the reader to a storage device.

23. The system as defined in claim 18 wherein the at least one machine-readable task identifier is at least one barcode.

24. The system as defined in claim 13 wherein the at least one machine-readable location identification code comprises a single code only, such that the first-read machine-readable location identification code and the last-read machine-readable location core are identical.

25. A computer program product for use on a computer system to track the time spent at a location by a person, the computer program product comprising:

a recording medium; and

means recorded on the medium for instructing the computer system to perform the steps of:

receiving service information data from a person, the  
5 service information data comprising at least one pair of matching entries, the  
at least one pair of matching entries comprising an arrival entry and a  
departure entry, the arrival entry comprising a first-read location code and the  
departure entry comprising a second-read location code,

determining the location based on the first-read location  
10 code and the second-read location code;

determining an arrival time from the arrival entry; and,

determining a departure time from the departure entry.

26. The computer program product as defined in claim 25 wherein  
the arrival entry comprises an arrival time record recording the arrival time,  
15 and the departure entry comprises a departure time record recording the  
departure time.

27. The computer program product as defined in claim 25 wherein  
the service information data comprises identification information for the  
person, the means recorded on the medium being further operable to instruct  
20 the computer system to provide a report generation means for generating at  
least one of

a shift report for the person over a selected time interval,  
wherein the shift report comprises each location in the plurality of locations  
the person has visited during the selected time interval and, for each location,  
25 an associated time period spent at the location; and,

a location report for the location over a selected time interval,  
wherein the location report comprises each person that has visited the

location during the selected time interval and a time spent by that person at the location.